

will remain unfixed. We can have all of the assurances we want from the administration, but the reality is, the administration is under very severe budgetary restraints as it goes into this next year. We in Congress are under very severe budgetary restraints. Everyone around this place is going to be looking for ways to save money. That means that when it comes to actually providing the resources to fight fires, the course of least resistance is to do what we have always been doing, what President Bush has done in the last several years: Ask for way too little money for firefighting. And then, when it turns out that you need an extra billion dollars, tell the Forest Service to take it out of their other accounts.

That is exactly what we have done in the last several years. We are getting ready to do that again. I, for one, am not persuaded that the concern the Senator from Idaho has expressed here is shared by all in the administration. I am confident he believes the issue is one that should be addressed. But each of us, as we know, has different priorities for what needs to be addressed. I would say this is a fairly low priority for the people putting the administration's budget proposal together, which we are going to receive this next January.

I very much think this issue needs to be addressed as part of this bill. Again, as I said a couple of times in my earlier statement, if we pass this bill without addressing the resource problem and the borrowing problem I am trying to get at in my amendment, we can give all the speeches we want, issue all the press releases, have all the press conferences we want saying what a great thing we have done for the American people, but 77 percent of the areas at highest risk are not going to have any Federal resources available to them.

In addition to that, the thinning activity, much of the forest restoration activity we all say we favor, is not going to be funded. So we need to deal with this as part of this bill.

Frankly, I am sorry to see the decision has been made to try to deal with this as a procedural vote. I think this is an important enough issue that we ought to have an up-or-down vote on it and let people express their point of view. When you raise a Budget Act point of order, basically what you are saying is this is not a big enough priority to justify changing the way the budget now sits. If that is the conclusion of most Members of the Senate, then I think shame on us. If we have the fires going in California, we have all the other problems we all talk about, and we are not willing to put that to the front of the priority list, then I think shame on us.

I very much prefer to see us have an up-or-down vote on this amendment. Obviously, that is not possible now with the Budget Act point of order and the motion to waive the Budget Act.

I will yield the floor, but I urge my colleagues to support the motion to waive the Budget Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) are necessarily absent.

I also announce that the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. NELSON) is absent attending a family funeral.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) would vote "yea".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 36, nays 60, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 421 Leg.]

YEAS—36

Akaka	Durbin	Leahy
Baucus	Feinstein	Levin
Bayh	Graham (FL)	Mikulski
Biden	Harkin	Murray
Bingaman	Hollings	Nelson (FL)
Boxer	Inouye	Reed
Cantwell	Jeffords	Reid
Clinton	Johnson	Rockefeller
Corzine	Kennedy	Sarbanes
Daschle	Kohl	Schumer
Dayton	Landrieu	Stabenow
Dodd	Lautenberg	Wyden

NAYS—60

Alexander	Crapo	Lugar
Allard	DeWine	McCain
Allen	Dole	McConnell
Bennett	Domenici	Miller
Bond	Dorgan	Murkowski
Breaux	Ensign	Nickles
Brownback	Enzi	Pryor
Bunning	Feingold	Roberts
Burns	Fitzgerald	Santorum
Byrd	Frist	Sessions
Campbell	Graham (SC)	Shelby
Carper	Grassley	Smith
Chafee	Gregg	Snowe
Chambliss	Hagel	Specter
Cochran	Hatch	Stevens
Coleman	Hutchison	Sununu
Collins	Inhofe	Talent
Conrad	Kyl	Thomas
Cornyn	Lincoln	Voinovich
Craig	Lott	Warner

NOT VOTING—4

Edwards	Lieberman
Kerry	Nelson (NE)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 36, the nays 60. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected. The point of order is sustained and the amendment falls.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. REID. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would like to ask how long that vote took.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Twenty-nine minutes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I don't know what more we can do here. I want

everyone to know we are doing our best over here to move these amendments. We have a lot of them over here. We are trying to move them. We can't do it if we waste a lot of time on these votes. I want everyone within the sound of my voice to know that we cannot finish the bill if these votes take 30 or 40 minutes. Everyone should understand that.

There are going to be people coming and asking: When can we leave? I have a plane. Are we going to have votes tomorrow?

We will have votes for days, the way this is going. We cannot finish this bill tonight with these votes taking as long as they are taking. I am disappointed, frankly, that the majority leader wasn't here to terminate the first vote. If we limit votes to 20 minutes, people would stop straggling in. It is not fair to the Senate.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, the Senator from Nevada is exactly correct in the fact that we are going to have to have more cooperation to move this bill along. We agreed before this vote that we could cut off votes after 20 minutes. We had the endorsement of that by the majority leader. But because Senators were on their way to vote and people told us they were on their way to vote, the vote dragged out longer than that.

I hope Senators will cooperate with the managers of the bill and leadership and let's get here and vote when the buzzer sounds and not wait until the last minute. These votes are going to be cut short. I hope everyone will cooperate with us.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, with the understanding of the manager of this bill, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Montana, Mr. BAUCUS, be recognized for 15 minutes to speak on the bill and whatever else he wishes to speak on; further, the Senator from New Mexico, Mr. BINGAMAN, who still has a number of other amendments that he wishes to be offered be recognized to offer the next amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, first, I thank my friend, the Senator from Nevada, and the managers of the bill for their accommodation.

It is vital that we pass this legislation this year.

Montana recently suffered from devastating wildfires, as have other western States. As the Senator from California, Senator FEINSTEIN pointed out repeatedly, the current news from Southern California is a painful reminder of a very large problem.

Across this country forests are threatened by insects, disease and the build up of hazardous fuels. The impacts of these conditions are real. And they play out year after year, fueling large fires that destroy lives and homes, diminish water and air quality, and destroy wildlife habitat.